

THE PERCEPTION OF FRESHMAN ENGLISH EDUCATION STUDENTS ON THEIR SPEAKING ANXIETY DURING THE LEARNING CLASS

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the speaking anxiety experienced by second-semester students in the English Education Department at the University of Islam Malang. Using the Public Speaking Class Anxiety Scale (PSCAS), the study identifies three major factors of anxiety: communication apprehension, physiological symptoms, and fear of negative evaluation. Quantitative data were collected via Google Forms and analyzed descriptively. The findings reveal that 76% of students experience moderate anxiety, 20% experience high anxiety, and only 4% experience low anxiety when speaking English in class. The results emphasize the need for supportive classroom environments and teaching strategies that mitigate student anxiety and enhance communicative competence.

Key words: Speaking anxiety, foreign language learning, PSCAS, communication apprehension, English education

INTRODUCTION

Language anxiety, especially in speaking, is a prominent barrier for foreign language learners. Many students fear speaking English due to possible negative judgment, lack of confidence, or limited language skills. This study focuses on the perceptions of freshman students regarding their anxiety during English-speaking activities in class and explores the factors that contribute to it.

This conclusion is reinforced by Damayanti's (2020) statement, which states that student anxiety comes from many causes. It is concluded that the student's anxiety in speaking in class is caused by a lack of vocabulary, underestimation of his abilities, lack of preparation, fear of making mistakes, and worry about being humiliated by their peers..

LITERATURE REVIEW

Research highlights three dominant factors of speaking anxiety: communication apprehension, test anxiety, and fear of negative evaluation (Horwitz et al., 1986). Previous studies (e.g., Damayanti, 2020; Hakim, 2019) affirm that internal factors (e.g., confidence) and external factors (e.g., peer pressure, teaching style) significantly influence speaking performance.

Anxiety : Anxiety is a feeling of fear, dread, and uneasiness that can be a normal stress reaction. However, anxiety disorders are a type of mental health condition that involves excessive fear or anxiety. Speaking anxiety in the classroom is a common feeling that can affect a student's learning process. It can be caused by a number of factors, including fear of being judged, lack of preparation, and negative self-talk.

Speaking Anxiety : Speaking anxiety, or the fear of public speaking, is a common experience affecting a significant portion of the population. It can manifest as physical symptoms like shaking, sweating, or dry mouth, and can also lead to avoidance behaviors. Overcoming this anxiety often involves preparation, practice, and potentially professional help.

Public Speaking: Public speaking, or speaking in front of the public, is the ability to convey messages, ideas, thoughts, or opinions verbally to an audience. This involves various aspects such as organizing thoughts, choosing the right words, using effective body language, and adjusting the speaking style to the audience.

RESEARCH METHOD

1. Research Design

The method used in this study is the descriptive quantitative method. Use quantitative descriptive method because Quantitative descriptive research aims to describe phenomena or symptoms that occur, without manipulating the variables being studied (Sudjana and Ibrahim 2007). This approach allows researchers to measure and analyze numerical data, such as number, frequency, average, and others, to understand the current situation or existing trends. In this study, quantitative data refers to the collection and evaluation of numerical data to test hypotheses or identify patterns and correlations; this figure aims to know how many people think, act, and feel in a certain way. The standard quantitative research design allows each respondent to be asked the same question so that the entire sample of data can be analyzed relatively. The data is provided in a numerical format and can be interpreted in a way that can be measured using statistical methods.

2. Participants and Data Collection

This research involved several 70 students of second semester student of UNISMA becoming research subjects. For collecting the data, researcher using questionnaire from Public Speaking Class Anxiety Score (PSCAS) by Yaikhong & Usaha (2012)

3. Data Analysis

The questionnaire is a 5-graded Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree). The results of this questionnaire data were analyzed using the data processor application (Microsoft Excel) as a whole by paying attention to each of the aspects of the factors that cause anxiety (communication apprehension, test anxiety, and fear of negative evaluation).

In measuring anxiety levels among second-semester English education students in three variables (communication apprehension, physiological symptoms, and fear of negative evaluation), the interval scale was first determined as follows:

Communication Apprehension

Minimum total score = 7

Maximum total score = 35

$$\frac{\text{Maximum score} - \text{Minimum score}}{\text{Total Scale}}$$

$$\frac{35 - 7}{3} = 9,33 (9)$$

Table 3.2 Communication Apprehension Scale

Score	Anxiety Level
7 – 16	Low Anxiety
17 – 25	Moderate Anxiety
26 – 35	High Anxiety

The interval of communication apprehension scale obtained based on the Likert scale is 9. It can be concluded that the score interpretation category is a multiple of 9, with a minimum limit of 7 and a maximum limit of 35.

Fear of Negative Evaluation

Minimum total score = 5

Maximum total score = 25

$$\frac{\text{Maximum score} - \text{Minimum score}}{\text{Total Scale}}$$

$$\frac{25 - 5}{3} = 6.67 (7)$$

Table 3.3 Fear Of Negative Evaluation Scale

Score	Anxiety Level
5-11	Low Anxiety
12-18	Moderate Anxiety
19-25	High Anxiety

The interval of fear of negative evaluation scale obtained based on the Likert scale is 6. It can be concluded that the score interpretation category is a multiple of 6, with a minimum limit of 5 and a maximum limit of 25.

Physiological Symptoms

Minimum total score = 5

Maximum total score = 25

$$\frac{\text{Maximum score} - \text{Minimum score}}{\text{Total Scale}}$$

$$\frac{25 - 5}{3} = 6.67 (7)$$

Table 3.4 Physiological Symptoms Scale

Score	Anxiety Level
5-11	Low Anxiety
12-18	Moderate Anxiety
19-25	High Anxiety

The interval of physiological symptoms scale obtained based on the Likert scale is 6. It can be concluded that the score interpretation category is a multiple of 6, with a minimum limit of 5 and a maximum limit of 25.

Total Anxiety Level

Minimum total score = 17

Maximum total score = 85

$$\frac{\text{Maximum score} - \text{Minimum score}}{\text{Variable}}$$

$$\frac{85 - 17}{3} = 22,67 (23)$$

Table 3.5 Anxiety Scale

Score	Anxiety Level
17 – 39	Low Anxiety
40 – 62	Moderate Anxiety
63 – 85	High Anxiety

The interval scale obtained based on the Likert scale is 23. It can be concluded that the score interpretation category is a multiple of 23, with a minimum limit of 17 and a maximum limit of 85.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

1. Communication Apprehension

The results show that the Communication Apprehension variable has an average score of 20.2, which falls into the moderate anxiety category. This means that most students feel anxious when they have to speak in English, especially in public or without preparation.

2. Fear of Negative Evaluation

The calculation results show that the Fear of Negative Evaluation aspect has an average score of 16.2, which falls into the moderate anxiety category. This finding indicates that many students feel anxious due to the fear of being evaluated negatively by their teachers and classmates when speaking English.

3. Physiological Symptoms

The results show that the Physiological Symptoms aspect has an average score of 19.5, which falls into the high anxiety category. This finding indicates that physical symptoms such as palpitations, trembling hands, and tension are the most dominant reactions experienced by students when they have to speak in English

4. Discussion

The purpose of this study was to find out the factors that cause students to experience anxiety while Speaking-English in class and to know what can be done to reduce the anxiety in learning English. This research involved several 70 students of second semester student of UNISMA becoming research subjects.

For collecting the data, researcher using questionnaire from Public Speaking Class Anxiety Score (PSCAS) by Yaikhong & Usaha (2012)

The first objective of this study is to identify the factors that most influence students' anxiety about speaking. There are three factors, as mentioned above, namely Communication Apprehension, Physiological Symptoms, and Fear of Negative Evaluation.

These three factors greatly influence students' anxiety in developing their speaking skills in English language learning, especially in relation to student performance in class related to speaking skills. Currently, many researchers are still interested in discussing these three factors and various testing techniques. Many researchers have

proven that these three factors do have a negative influence, causing students' anxiety to be relatively high.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

Conclusion: In short, out of a total of 70 second semester students of University of Islam Malang experienced anxiety with three factors tested: Communication Apprehension, Physiological Symptoms, and Fear of Negative Evaluation. After research using an adaptation questionnaire that has been validated and has calculated each student's anxiety factor, it is concluded that the anxiety level of the students are “Moderate”

Suggestions: for Further Research: This study still has many shortcomings, such as the lack of conditionality of students who should have taken this study more seriously. In addition, this study only discusses some aspects of anxiety that lack detail. It is recommended that subsequent researchers discuss in more detail the three factors of the causes of anxiety experienced by young learners in English. In addition, it can also be tested for higher-level learners, whether this study also produces the same findings as young learners who are still new to English language learning.

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